

Message Text

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R 251013Z OCT 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO CINCPAC
USSAG

S E C R E T STATE 210447

EXDIS MIL HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING BANGKOK 16579 SENT STATE RPT TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T BANGKOK 16579

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECDEF, CINCPAC, USSAG

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, TH
SUBJ: CONTINUED NEGOTIATION ON US FORCE REDUCTION

REF: BANGKOK 13782

1. GENERAL KRIANGSAK, IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH
POLMIL COUNSELOR OCTOBER 19, CONFIRMED HIS CONTINUING
RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN RTG FOR NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING
US MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND. IN FACT, HE CON-
SIDERS THAT NEW RELATIONSHIPS ALLOW HIM GREATER FREEDOM
TO MAKE DECISIONS ON BEHALF OF RTG REGARDING FACILITIES FOR
US FORCES, IN CONTRAST TO FORMER PRIME MINISTER THANOM'S
INSISTENCE ON GIVING PERSONAL APPROVAL IN ADVANCE EVEN ON MINOR
ACTIONS.

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2. KRIANGSAK STRESSED HIS CONVICTION THAT IT WAS
ESSENTIAL FOR US-THAI RELATIONS THAT THERE CONTINUE TO
BE REGULAR BILATERAL MEETINGS TO DISCUSS THE US PRESENCE.
HE SUGGESTED THAT THESE MEETINGS SHOULD NOT HAVE ANY

PUBLICITY AND MIGHT, FOR THE TIME BEING, BE LIMITED TO A SMALLER GROUP WHO COULD AGREE THAT THE SITUATION IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA DID NOT YET ALLOW FURTHER MAJOR US REDUCTIONS. HE SUGGESTED US PROVIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE BRIEFINGS ON THE MILITARY SITUATION IN CAMBODIA, WHICH CONCERNS THE RTG. COMMENT: KRIANGSAK'S SUGGESTION REGARDING BRIEFINGS ON CAMBODIA WAS NOT A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION BUT AN ATTEMPT TO ADD SUBSTANCE OTHER THAN WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES TO THESE MEETINGS. A NUMBER OF BRIEFINGS ON CAMBODIA HAVE BEEN GIVEN BY EMBASSY, MACTHAI, USSAG, AND OTHER OFFICERS AND WE HAVE REGULAR ARRANGEMENT TO PROVIDE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION TO RTG ON CAMBODIA AND OTHER MATTERS. KRIANGSAK'S POINT IS THAT HE CONSIDERS IT ESSENTIAL THAT HE BE ABLE TO REPORT FAITHFULLY TO THE GOVERNMENT THAT TALKS ARE CONTINUING AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT CAN SUBSTANTIATE THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE IN PROCESS IF QUESTIONS ARE RAISED. END COMMENT.

3. IN CONNECTION WITH FOREGOING, FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS MONDAY, OCT. 22: QUOTE. PULLOUT TALKS CONTINUE. THAI AND AMERICAN MILITARY AUTHORITIES WILL CONTINUE TALKS ON THE GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL OF THE US TROOPS FROM THIS COUNTRY, LT. GEN. KRIANGSAK CHAMANAND, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF SAID YESTERDAY.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THAI TEAM TO JOINT COMMITTEE ON WITHDRAWAL SAID THE CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION WILL CAUSE NO CHANGES IN THE REDUCTION OF US TROOPS IN THAILAND. HE ADDED THAT THERE WILL BE NO WITHDRAWALS OF US TROOPS THIS MONTH, BECAUSE THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES IS INSECURE. END QUOTE.

4. MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AIR CHIEF MARSHAL DAWEE, TOOK SAME LINE IN RESPONSE TO QUERY FROM NEWSMAN AT OCT. 24 PRESS CONFERENCE. QUOTE. SINCE THE NECESSITY FOR CERTAIN ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN ENDED NOW, THE UNITED STATES IS WITHDRAWING ITS MILITARY FORCES STEADILY. WE DO NOT HAVE TO HOLD NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE MEETINGS ARE HELD REGULARLY. IN SECRET

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OTHER WORDS, THERE IS A COMMITTEE COORDINATING WORK WITH ALLIES THAT IS IN CHARGE OF HOLDING MEETINGS REGULARLY TO DETERMINE WHICH UNITS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN, AND THE PROPER TIME FOR THEM TO BE WITHDRAWN. END QUOTE.

5. WITH REGARD POSSIBLE FURTHER REDUCTIONS, EMBASSY HAS BEEN REQUESTED THROUGH MILITARY CHANNELS TO PROVIDE PACAF WITH "POLITICAL ASSESSMENT" REGARDING USAF PLANS TO SALVAGE 23 EB-66 AIRCRAFT NOW IN THAILAND. OUR REPLY WAS THAT AT PRESENT TIME IT WOULD BE IN US INTEREST TO REDEPLOY AIRCRAFT FROM THAILAND FOR SALVAGE INSTEAD OF DEADLINING THEM IN STORAGE AT THAI BASES PENDING FINAL DECISION ON DISPOSITION. IT APPEARS TO US THAT, IF US MILITARY HAS

NO FURTHER NEED FOR THESE AIRCRAFT, WE SHOULD NOTIFY RTG
SOON OF OUR INTENTIONS TO REMOVE THESE AIRCRAFT AND
ASSOCIATED PERSONNEL AS A TOKEN OF OUR CONTINUING
INTENTION TO MAKE ORDERLY REDUCTIONS AS THE SITUATION
PERMITS.

6. COMMENT: KRIANGSAK'S JUDGMENT ABOUT HIS GREATER FREEDOM
MAY BE PREMATURE SINCE WE DOUBT ISSUE HAS BEEN SPECIFI-
CALLY ADDRESSED BY LEADERS NEW GOVERNMENT. RE PARA 2 (ABOVE)
WE PROPOSE TO INDICATE OUR READINESS TO RESUME DISCUSSIONS
ON US PRESENCE, SUGGESTING WE KEEP THEM FOR PRESENT BETWEEN
MILITARY AUTHORITIES, AND COVERING GROUND INDICATED BY
KRIANGSAK WITHOUT GETTING INTO FURTHER REDUCTIONS UNLESS
RAISED BY THAIS.

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